1:Sanders Z-5/4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

101 physical environment. To follow the story of village life in Greece as portrayed in this book, one must be able to go imaginatively from one part of Greece to another, since every experience described will be related to the place where it occurred.

[631] *Macedonia*, linked historically with Alexander the Great and the missionary activities of St. Paul, is a part of the administrative division of Northern Greece. Its northern mountain barrier separates it from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, each of which has adjoining territory which it too calls Macedonia. The Greeks believe that no area has been more bled over than Macedonia, where Greek and Slav meet.

[563] [249] *Thrace*, to the east, is also in Northern Greece and is the one area where the Turkish minority still live. Like Macedonia, it is famous for the Oriental kind of tobacco grown there.

[433] *Epirus*, the northwestern province, is a mountainous land of great beauty and stormy traditions. It borders Albania.

[243] *Thessaly*, south of Macedonia, boasts Mount Olympus and fertile plains which produce a fifth of the country's wheat.

Central Greece, stretching from the Ionian to the Aegean Seas, holds many tourist attractions such as Thebes, Delphi, and Athens. It also includes the slender island of Euboea along its eastern flank.

The Peloponnesos, separated from the rest of mainland Greece by the Corinth Canal, is an archaeologist's paradise. It is important agriculturally as well as being intimately connected with Greece's liberation from Turkey in 1829.

In addition to these regions on the mainland there are five island groupings in the Greek kingdom:

The Aegean Islands hug the coast of Turkey. Lesbos is the largest, Chios perhaps the best known.

[648] *The Dodecanese Islands*, to the southeast of the mainland, came under Greek control after World War II with the defeat of the Italians. Rhodes, the chief island, is one of the major tourist attractions of the Eastern Mediterranean.

[778] [788] *The Cyclades Islands* are also to the southeast of, but nearer to, mainland Greece. Tinos, one of these islands, is the site of a miracle-working shrine visited by thousands of visitors every year on the Day of the Assumption.

Crete stands alone. Its civilization predates that of the mainland. Because of its better soil, more of its people are interested in farming than in fishing or shipping.

[731] *The Ionian Islands*, on the west coast of Greece, were the hardest hit in the devastating earthquakes of August 1953. They include the beautiful island of Corfu, which was not damaged, as well as Ithaca, home of Odysseus.

These regions, particularly those of the mainland, will be more than names on the map as one becomes familiar with the peasants who dwell in them and with many of the natural features associated with the mountains, the plains, and the sea.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

governmental structure which tied together these separated local governments into any larger whole. Thus, as Greece moved toward modern nationhood, the type of local government which had existed under the Ottoman Empire began to wither.

One Athenian professor said to me that after ten years of revolution (1821–1830) the people wanted a king who could end anarchy and bring order. They had to accept a centralized government and put up with laws not natural to the country but which were necessary if Greece were to appear "civilized" enough to get loans from abroad. "We still need a legal system agreeing better with our country," he concluded. This is one reason, he thinks, why the peasant tries to get around the laws; he does not look upon them as his laws, as Greek laws.

During the first forty years of this century, the greatest changes in community life occurred under Venizelos in 1912 and under Metaxas in 1935. Venizelos, for instance, refashioned the old demes, or local units consisting of several villages, and made each village a unit responsible for supporting many local services under a community council and president. The deme still had the taxing, police, and judicial powers. The central government attempted to supply teachers for communities, a step which meant much less local autonomy but which was essential if Greece were to have a uniform system of education. Many other activities which local governmental bodies had handled up to this time had to be approved by the nomarch (administrator of the nomos) and ministry. Even the Constitution of 1927, though leaving to local government matters managed directly by the citizens, left the definition of "local matters" so vague that the demes and communes were at the mercy of the legislators and ministries who, by law and decree, could "outline their powers, procedures, and revenues." [4]

Metaxas, after abrogating the Constitution of 1927, imposed on the total Greek population "modern" methods of hygiene, childrearing, and education. He even attempted to introduce early weaning and the use of bottles. In community affairs, local elections were abolished and local officials could be dismissed and replaced by the Minister of the Interior.

Today, according to one authority:

> The local government units in Greece are demes and communes. There are 217 demes and 5,746 communes. Demes, under the 1912 law, were those units with 10,000 or more population; but recent amendments allowed so many exceptions that there are now 144 below this minimum standard. Communes are supposed to have 300 or more people and an elementary school; but this standard was also relaxed so that now there are many below this figure. As a matter of fact, half of the communes today have less than five hundred inhabitants.[5]

Since such small population centers cannot support all of the expected services, some kind of amalgamation of units is thought desirable. But how

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631 642 this is to be worked out puzzles Greek politicians as much as it does American politicians interested in United States counties, laid out in horse-and-buggy days and ill adapted to today's rapid-transit world. In any combination, one center will gain and the other lose, a fact which has local political repercussions in a democratic system. Some of these become apparent as one views the work of the community council and its president.

The Community Council

207 In Phrangista, a mountain village of Central Greece, I was shaken out of pleasant contemplation as two loudspeakers on the village square suddenly began to inform one and all of the latest news of the day.

275 243 247 This was in the spring of 1953, and we were on a coffeeshop verandah newly made of concrete. Across the dusty thoroughfare, some hens had discovered wheat sheaves drying in front of the house of the carpenter; next door, potted geraniums were blooming in the window of a handsome stone house. We were shut in from the outside world by hazy mountains.

262 The proprietor's wife and daughter had just brought us preserved walnut sweets in a spoon with the traditional glass of water. One spooned the sweets, gulped the water, and commented on the good flavor of the walnuts preserved before they had fully ripened. And then came the radio. These

207 177 loudspeakers, sounding forth noon and evening, featured the broadcasts from Ioannina, Patras, and Athens. The radio, obviously much more powerful than the battery sets frequently encountered in the ordinary coffeehouse, aroused my curiosity. I turned to the president of the community

[422] council, who was sitting nearby. He told me that the radio was community-owned, that it had been placed there by the American Mission, and that it had "brought civilization" to that place. But the more I talked with him, the more I realized that bringing in civilization through this medium created some local administrative problems.

The American Mission, preferring to distribute the radio directly to the local authorities rather than through a regular government ministry, stipulated that the community would have to provide the gasoline for the motor which furnished the energy for the radio. So the first problem was to find the money to buy the gasoline, which cost a great deal by the time it was transported over the mountains from Lamia. A second problem was locating someone (in this case, two teen-aged boys) who could operate the complicated machine and tune in the radio. The president proudly reported that on the previous day a screw had worked loose and the program was temporarily interrupted — but only temporarily — for these competent youngsters quickly found the trouble and replaced the screw.

623 653 651 727 Before I left Phrangista, the president wanted me to see the church which the villagers had recently rebuilt. It had been completely and deliberately destroyed by the Nazis. The archbishop had given some funds for its res-

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Although not all of these taxes apply directly to villages, some of them do. Mention has already been made of the personal work on community projects, as well as the tax on sale and purchase of cattle as evidence by the Neochori notice of bids for farming these out. In addition, there is a "head" tax ranging from twenty to fifty cents annually on each animal. A list of animals over two years of age is drawn up in March, or three months before the commune budget is due. Perhaps the most important of these revenues from the peasant point of view is the tax of 2 to 4 percent on his agricultural products, which the local government keeps. He pays this in lieu of a property tax on the land that he owns. When I explained to some of my Greek friends that property taxes were the chief source of revenue for many local governments in America, they asked if I meant agricultural land. When I answered in the affirmative, they were nonplussed and pointed out that it was much fairer to tax the products of the land than the land itself, since the products showed best of all the value of the land.

The Village and the Central Government

To understand the community council, one must see its relationship with the central government.[10] It does not, for instance, undertake to maintain law and order, since the local police are not under its jurisdiction, nor does it have much to say about its local school, except through an elected school board of limited powers. Even in those affairs where it is supposed to have jurisdiction, such as drawing up its own budget or arranging for the collection of taxes, it has to gain the approval of the nomarch, who is appointed by the Minister of Interior.

Only as I got to know some of the nomarchs did I begin to appreciate the relationship of the central to the local governments. One nomarch, Yannes Gotsis, was in charge of the nomos of Serrai in Macedonia in 1953. He seemed dedicated to his task and epitomized several of the qualities I have come to admire in many Greeks. We discussed the specifics of local government and the part that the nomarch plays, but he soon went beyond the technicalities of administration to something of its philosophy:

> In the majority of the Greeks there is a submerged desire to make a better future for as many people as possible. The Greek really wants a better community life, although he at times gives the impression that conflict is his basic urge. But along with his sense of community he has an appreciation for human personality, which means that if another person disagrees with him he does not try by force to get his own opinion accepted; he tries persuasion and explanation. If others continue to disagree, it is not because they fail to appreciate him but because they each have their own personality to put to the use of the community.

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631 This led into a discussion of some of the kinds of conflict which occur in
634 the community and the part the nomarch has to play in resolving them. The
578 location of a new village church sometimes becomes an issue. Many arguments are not based on any vested interest in a particular spot but on the individuals' assessment of what would in actuality be the best spot. In order to get proof that his idea is better than other ideas, a person will leave his farm work or close up his shop and go to the city where he can get the advice of some authority whom he can quote to support him. Or several villagers in disagreement will decide to go to the nomarch to get his opinion.

631 On another occasion I went with the nomarch of Kozane to visit a village
634 for which he had responsibility. The agriculturist for this nomos, who had
623 come with us, introduced many of the peasants to the nomarch before the
653 meeting began at the schoolhouse. Eventually the meeting got started. The nomarch, flanked on one side by the council president and on the other by the council secretary, got down to business in a most direct way. One man got up and described the condition of his home, in which he said
[727] he was ashamed to live. This village had been destroyed by the guerrillas and the need for help had been great. Because he had a special file for each village in his nomos, the nomarch knew that when he took office 75 percent of all the houses needed rebuilding but that now that figure had dropped to 29 percent. He reminded them that in his nomos there were four thousand families without housing or even an elementary roof over their heads, but said he would see what could be done. He then found out what they expected to do with the self-help program based on voluntary contributions of labor. He reminded them that on two occasions the state had given them about $1700 to help in the construction of a road to the village and that, in view of their present need, he would see if he could get another grant. This time he would pay wages so that they might have some much-needed income.

631 When we emerged from the crowded schoolhouse, I noticed that about
634 twenty men had stood outside trying to overhear what was going on. The
275 nomarch stopped to talk to some of them. When we had climbed into a truck which was to take us across a muddy patch to our cars half-a-mile away, the black-robed priest came running up, an unhappy, unattractive fellow, to make a last-minute complaint to the nomarch. "Sir," he shouted, "did you know that the coffeehouse proprietor is now opening up on Sundays before the church service is over, which is contrary to the law?" The crowd looked amazed and eagerly waited to see how the nomarch would handle this troublesome complaint. He replied: "My good fellow, you go on and give them good enough sermons, and then the men won't want to go to the coffeehouse during church time."

631 Reference to one other nomarch will be enough to show the type of men
634 who were filling that post in 1953. Mr. Aronis was the nomarch of Kala-
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1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

mata, at the southern part of the Peloponnesos. When we discussed the attitude of the peasants toward Athens and the central government, he commented: "Life in the village is difficult; Athens has had special privileges. The villages are 100 percent right in their complaints. In my nomos many of them have no roads, no irrigation or drainage. Their education is so far behind that it is pitiful; their homes are in awful condition. How can a peasant under such circumstances feel gratitude! Paying for the priest and the teacher should be the job of the central government in the same way that a father supports a child. The recent decision to turn back to the communes a share of the tobacco tax is encouraging the villagers very much. Here it will amount to about one dollar yearly per capita."

When I asked him more about the actual workings of the communes in his nomos, he repeated much that others had said:

> The president of the community represents in a small way the national government. So the community council is both an arm of the central government and also a representative of the local village. All decisions of the council have to be communicated to the nomarch; this is compulsory. If the council and president decide to spend any of the local funds the nomarch has the right to say "yes" or "no." If they wish to add a paid employee, the nomarch will check to see whether it is legal or not. If the nomarch does not answer in two weeks' time, then the local council has the right to go ahead without further permission. But the villagers for the most part are not conscious of their rights after the expiration of the two-week period and are capable of waiting fifteen years. The chief reason for delays in such matters is the lack of sufficient personnel in the nomarchy.

During 1952–53, the possibility seemed strong of developing a capable, well-trained group of nomarchs, all of whom were supposed to have security of tenure and not be subject to dismissal except for carefully defined "cause." These nomarchs were being sent to England, the United States, and elsewhere to study how local governments functioned, and to see what ideas might be adaptable to Greece. The community presidents, over and over again, expressed appreciative comments on the work of many of these nomarchs. To be sure, in some villages I found that the nomarch had not yet made himself known, but I had the general impression that a much better relationship was building up between the peasantry and the national government because of the changed attitudes of friendliness and understanding on the part of these key officials. When I revisited Greece in 1955 for another study period, I found that the Minister of Interior in early March 1954 had rescinded the career-nomarch legislation and had immediately dismissed one third of the nomarchs. According to one observer:

> The odd characteristic about these dismissals was that they were not necessarily based on political opinions nor on efficiency. Several strongly-pro-government nomarchs were dismissed despite known efficiency. Apparently this arose

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than a two-year stint. But they do get higher pay than those in the army. They must apply for this service, are carefully investigated before they are accepted, and then are carefully trained. Some stay on after their three-year tour of duty is up and are given, at the end of twelve years, a lump sum as severance pay. With this, many of them open up some business of their own.

The field guards, also under the Ministry of Interior, are under a different administration but work closely with the gendarmerie, since many cases, such as theft from a field, involve both services. The gendarmes, because they are responsible for public security, also make their own investigations. In the village of Kyparissia (Peloponnesos) at the time of our visit, the people were temporarily without the services of field policemen, although they still received gendarme service from Tripolis. They were then working out an arrangement to pay a field policeman in products, although they would hold him responsible if he did not find the animals which had damaged crops. They expected him to work only during the day, for there was little danger at night. Far to the north in Epirus, near the Albanian border, we came across field policemen who also assumed security functions not only against animals but also against infiltrators from across the Iron Curtain.

The larger villages and towns serving as centers for governmental services enjoy many advantages that the smaller, more isolated villages do not have. In Dimitsana, in the Gortynia section of the Peloponnesos, the local people say that their economy is kept going only because of the state employees located there. It is the seat of a gymnasium (secondary school), a lower court, the gendarmerie command, a field-guard office, a tax office, and a postal and telegraph office. In Northern Greece the governmental facilities in Stavroupolis include:

1. The court house which serves the area of thirty villages.
2. A police station which also serves a neighboring commune.
3. Farm-security service (field policemen) which operates under the auspices of the government but is supported by a separate local tax on the area.
4. Tobacco board which operates on an area level and is responsible for the taxation and standardization of tobacco.
5. Extension service which serves the whole area. There is a home club which operates under a home agent who belongs to a different institution but is supervised by the extension service. The rural club located in the village operates under the supervision of the extension agent.
6. Forestry-conservation service which controls lumbering and protects the forest sections of the area from erosion.[13]

Perhaps the least appreciated service which the central government carries out for the commune is the collection of those taxes used in the support of church, school, police, and a number of advisory services. Many tax

1:Sanders Z-5,M (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

651 631 specialists think it undesirable to have over 90 percent of all taxes collected by the national government, as is done in Greece, even though much of it is channeled back through various services to the local communities. At the same time, they admit that there is great reluctance on the part of local authorities to take on the tax-collection function and that in those instances where they do collect local funds they do so inefficiently. Obviously, the golden mean has not yet been found in this delicate area of the relationship between local and central government.[13]

647 When the topic of conversation turns from the services to the officials who carry them out, local informants respond fast and furiously, much of the comment in disapproving tones. I have yet to find a description of Greek life, past or present, that deals very kindly with Greek officialdom. This might be said of many countries, but in Greece the lowly and even high-placed official is beset with so many difficulties that it is a wonder he functions at all. His first problem is the low standards traditionally expected 647 of the civil servant. Most Greeks think that it is perfectly proper procedure for them to bestow a favor upon some official so that he will give their case 662 preference, either in considering it before other cases or in recognizing certain extenuating circumstances in their favor. The law may or may not be abrogated and regular channels set aside, but the irregularities deal quite often with rearrangements and interpretations within the scope of the limits set by the law so that one person gets preferential treatment over others. When one comes face to face with the great number of papers that have to be signed to do even a simple transaction involving governmental authority, one realizes how great is the temptation to bribe or bring to bear some other consideration (such as working through the good graces of a relative of the official) to shorten the red tape and wind up the matter more quickly than usual. Not all officials would condone such measures, but they are subjected to much temptation.

647 A second problem, tied in with the first, is the low compensation which officials receive in the face of increased living costs. Since many government workers cannot live even modestly on their salaries, they take on [465] other commitments. These part-time jobs cause them to slight their full- [464] time government employment, for which supervision is frequently lax.

Insecurity in the job is a third difficulty for many of the higher officials. [661] The ministries, which in countries like France are run by highly skilled civil servants no matter how many cabinet ministers come and go, are [645] staffed in Greece by people, many quite capable, who are apt to be swept out of office when a new minister comes in. Many, because of sheer competence and skillful legerdemain, manage to survive from one change of ministers to the next, but are never sure that they will weather the next changeover. In some ministries there have been as many as forty different ministers in six years.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

A final difficulty lies in inadequate personnel and equipment to do many of the highly technical governmental tasks as they should be done. Engineers who are responsible for numerous activities in many villages may not have transportation facilities sufficient to visit these villages as often as would be desirable. Those responsible for accounting and fiscal matters may not have sufficient clerical help to keep up with the work load, thereby delaying reports or requests from local governments.[14]

But despite these difficulties, I would place the crux of the problem of the relationship between local and central government in the attitudes which the officials assume toward villagers and even townspeople. There is something about being an official in Greece that tends to make one officious. The officeholder may not realize this but, as he takes on the roles that go with a new governmental position, he tries to carry an air of authority that does not quite ring true, or else he tries to bolster up his feeling of insecurity by lording it over those who are in some measure under his control. He preserves his own *philotimo,* or self-esteem, by clinging to all the symbols of prestige to the bitter end. I could want no better documentation of this state of affairs than a notice distributed in November 1952 by the Minister of Agriculture, which appeared on the walls of the director of agriculture in Kozane. It read:

Mr. Director:

1. Don't forget that we are the servants of the people.
2. Don't forget that your pay comes from the work and the sweat of the people.
3. Please be polite and just to the people and your employees.
4. Keep working hours; do not go away during working hours which are for the public.
5. Reply willingly and quickly to requests and petitions of the people. "Come by tomorrow" is not accepted.

People — Farmers:

1. Do not ask for illegal things but demand your rights.
2. If you do not get your rights or have complaints write to Complaints Office of the Ministry and you will get a quick reply.
3. Even then, if you don't get justice, write directly to me.

Minister of Agriculture, A. Apostolidis

In official Athens, over the past few years, there has been many a tug of war, sometimes silent and sometimes raucous, between those who would decentralize many functions of government to the local units and those who, for a variety of reasons, would maintain strong central control. It is safe to say that those who favor the former course are those who think of government chiefly as an administrative apparatus through which citizens' needs are met. Certainly, many members of the American Mission have

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1:Sanders Z-5M (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

631 647 [177]

sought to strengthen the hands of those favoring decentralization in the belief that this would accomplish more with American aid money. On the other hand, those who favor strong centralization tend to think of government primarily in political rather than administrative terms. They see government as an arena where personalities and parties struggle for the opportunity of directing the affairs of state. They realize that much political power is built on patronage or at least the promise of patronage; they also argue that the political process is built upon compromise and that many administrative practices are established in governmental bureaus to forestall any such compromises. Which group is prompted more by disinterested, public-spirited motives can best be determined by the observer on the spot as different personalities, representing these varying points of view, step onto the stage.

664

The Peasant and Politics

Shortly after my arrival in Greece in the fall of 1952, I encountered an interesting case study of the peasant and politics. All over Greece, one September Sunday, the farmers demonstrated against their government. This affair was treated, as one would expect, quite differently by the various Athenian newspapers, but the general tone of argument never got down to the facts of the peasants' grievance but instead haggled over who was responsible for getting them all stirred up.

[204] One newspaper, *Philelevtheros,* under the caption "The Farmers' Plight," wrote:

> There is no Greek who does not admit the rights of the farmers, or the fact that they are, and always were, the most neglected class in this country. Everyone feels the farmers' plight as if it were his own, and they know that Greek society will never stand on its feet as long as the farmer's lot is a miserable one. Their present fate, however, is not the fault of the Government, but is due to a whole century of reactionary rule. The farmers' demonstrations would have [665] been even stronger and more genuine if the Rally Party agents had not attempted to exploit them. However, they failed in this attempt.

[204] *Ethnos,* a newspaper representing a rival party, reported under the caption "Farmers' Demonstrations":

> Over the whole of Greece, in all those areas where men strive to get the maximum crop from our not very fertile soil, solid demonstrations were held last Sunday. The farmers were protesting with absolutely justified indignation against the indifference the Government is showing in handling their problems, and the way in which it has withdrawn its promises to them.
>
> In the face of this Pan-Hellenic uprising, the Government, through its comic Minister of Coordination, and through its press, finds nothing better to give in

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

intimately, agreed with many of the points that the Athens gymnasium director had made, as the following summary of his comment shows:

About thirty or forty years ago the community was independent. It was something solid; it elected the best people to office. Why? They elected their own teacher, their own priest, and the field guards. Three main points of their life — education, religion, and security — were all in their own hands. The central government wanted to take into its own control all of these functions in order to put in its own appointees who would influence the people. The peasants lost their ability to manage their own affairs, and became hostile to the government and to the teacher. The teacher is no longer responsible to the farmer but to the government. Nowadays, because of this and because of the anti-government attitude brought in by the refugees from Turkey, the peasant has separated himself from his government and asks everything from it.

The teacher has no obligation toward the village, no sense of community relations. He stays in the coffeehouse and aims to move to a town or city. Formerly a village would give some bright boy a chance to go outside for an education and then he would come back and live in the village where he had his own home. He was one of the best teachers.

When one begins to sift from many conversations the findings about the village teacher and to read the village accounts which include him in their pages, a few matters stand out. First of all, it is true that the allegiance of the teacher is to the national government and to the bureaucracy upon which his advancement depends. He thinks of himself as a representative of the national ideal, which he is supposed to instill in every child studying under him. His loyalty is therefore to Greece, and one of his major purposes is to help the village child feel a close identification with the national state. Second, he tries, often like a drillmaster, to get the pupils to master the course content worked out in Athens. The brighter ones need encouragement to go on to the gymnasium and must receive the preparation that will serve them in good stead there. Third, the teacher must train children to participate through song, recitation, and national dance in the various holiday celebrations and festivals that come along and at which the school makes an appearance. This serves a village purpose in that it encourages local traditions and provides some diversion in what many would consider the humdrum life of the villager. But there are few teachers in the national school system, unless they are in one of the specialized schools set up for the purpose, who undertake any adult education or even try to make the younger scholars look around at their village environment for ways in which it can be improved. Very often I got the impression that many teachers were even trying to make the villagers forget the present and its problems by focusing their attention on the past and its glories as a substitute for action today.

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

6

The Village: As a Community

The Village Government

621 IN THE FIRST CHAPTER the village was described as a setting for the life of families, which are the most significant social groups in the settlement. It now becomes possible to consider the functions of the village itself as an entity in its own right. First, the formal organization of village-wide activities and responsibilities will be discussed, and second, the attitudes of the inhabitants toward Vasilika in contrast with their attitudes toward the family and the nation.

[631] The Greek government classifies Vasilika as a *kinotis* for administrative purposes despite its small population. A *kinotis* is legally a populated center with at least 300 inhabitants and a school, and constitutes one of the four kinds of administrative subdivisions in each of the nomes (provinces) of Greece.

622 623 665 666 The formal governmental activities of the *kinotis* are the responsibility of a locally elected president and council. A community the size of Vasilika is entitled to a council of five members elected for a four-year term. Voting must be done along party lines; and voters select five names from among those listed by the party of their choice. Vasilika had only two political parties in its local elections in 1956. Under the system of proportional representation then operating, the four men with the most votes from the party which itself had the majority of votes were elected to the council. The fifth member should have been the man with the most votes in the minority party. At the last Vasilika election, however, the man in this position preferred not to act as a minority representative and the second man on the list became the council member. The five representatives then elect a president and a vice-president from among their number, usually for two-year terms. The council and community are served by an additional official, the secretary of the *kinotis*. The secretary is not elected and has no vote on the council. He is appointed by the nomarch (governor) of the province upon nomination from the village council. His salary varies with the income of

624 [634]

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

candles from the priest's, or from each other's if they got impatient waiting to reach the priest. The second climax was, of course, the moment when, with the entire congregation standing outside the church, the priest announced, *"Khristos anesti,"* "Christ is risen," and the boys set off firecrackers.

After the service, people took a short nap, because by 6:00 in the morning, final preparations for Easter dinner would start. As has already been indicated, families joined with neighbors or relatives to eat the spit-roasted Easter lamb. Visiting relatives moved about to greet the villagers they knew. Baptisms, which had been arranged for the afternoon because prospective godparents enjoyed visiting the village at Easter, took place in the church, and the white baptismal clothes of the babies added sparkle to all the Easter finery. After an afternoon service in the church of St. Nicholas, the musicians came, settled in the *agbora,* and dancing began. But fewer villagers participated in either the dancing or the watching than at Carnival, because people preferred to spend more time at home with their visiting relatives. Nevertheless, a good crowd kept the *agbora* musicians occupied until eight in the evening, after which singing could be heard here and there about the village. The next day some of the young boys claimed to have been up singing half the night.

The description just given is only a brief outline of the main events and lacks many details of the village's celebration of Easter. My purpose in including it here is to illustrate the point that Carnival and Holy Week are times at which the Greek Orthodox rites and the accompanying customs provide activities in which all villagers participate at the same time and within the confines of Vasilika. Even under these circumstances, however, the visiting relatives act as a countervailing centrifugal force, pulling each family in the direction of its extra-village interests, as they use the holiday visit as an opportunity for family consultations on the problems of the coming year, and as the visitors tell of their lives in other villages, in towns, and in the cities.

Vasilika's *paniyiri,* the feast day of its patron saints, St. Cosmos and St. Damian, on the 1st of July, is another occasion when a religious event is celebrated by the entire village and draws visitors to the community. Other holy days and Sunday masses do not draw all the villagers together in the same way. School children are the most faithful communicants for regular Sunday mass; a small proportion of women and girls attend regularly, but the rest of the inhabitants appear to attend sporadically, as they please. During periods of heavy agricultural work, mass may be omitted on a Sunday. For the most part, individuals and families, rather than the village, are the units for participation in the formal religious activity of the settlement.

The Villagers as Greeks

To summarize the situation, the formal organization of the village community, the *kinotis,* provides neither autonomy in village affairs nor a unified structure. Decisions made by the village leaders are subject to approval by outside political authorities. Governmental, commercial, religious, and educa-

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

621 631 tional activities, although ultimately controlled in Athens, function through different organizational channels. The unity that might be achieved by overlapping personnel in a village as small as Vasilika is not, in fact, achieved because each of the formal divisions has its own leadership. Some degree of concurrence exists, however, as a result of the tendency for the leaders in each of these spheres, except the governmental, to remain relatively permanent. The priest has been the religious leader of the community for a generation, the former secretary of the council had been in office for twenty years, the school teacher has been there for ten years, and so on. Nevertheless, officials who want to persuade Vasilika's [208] population to some new course of action know that they cannot succeed by persuading the formal leaders only, or even the influential older men only, but must convince each head of a family, as well, if they are to get widespread compliance.

621 476 571 It would seem as though the formal organization of the village, and the family activities which so often lead out of the village and separate the interests of each family from those of others in the settlement, prevent the life-long daily associations of the men of the village from producing a driving force for enthusiastic joint action for village-wide goals. Nor does the system of voluntary, impermanent dyadic contracts between individuals produce any large groups with a sense of solidarity. As the foregoing has shown, then, there are activities which focus the attention of all the villagers but there is little active village-wide cooperation for village enterprises.

621 186 Yet this situation seems to conflict with the professed attitude of Vasilika's inhabitants toward their village and region. The villagers speak of Vasilika in the way Greeks from other villages speak of their home communities. A man or woman's *patridha*, that is, his village of origin in this context (*patridha* may mean Greece as one's nation of origin in contrast with other nations), is always recommended as a place to visit. People frequently mentioned certain qualities of their home villages which were worthy of praise. The air and the water, they would say, are clean, in the sense of pure and sweet, and these characteristics, they thought, made the village a healthy place, and, by extension, potentially therapeutic for anyone. The people of one's own [609] village were *endopyi* (home folks) in contrast to *kseni* (strangers), and the term *kseni* was used equally to refer to a man from Parori two miles away, and to us from the United States thousands of miles distant.

186 609 123 685 621 *Kseni*, people not living in Vasilika, were described as thieves and as inhospitable. We were consistently told to lock our automobile in other villages, and also consistently told that it was not necessary to do so in Vasilika. Indeed, both with respect to other villages and within Vasilika itself, a distrust of others was most frequently expressed by saying that the villagers in question were thieves, and it was an accusation not meant lightly. On two occasions before we understood the situation, when we mislaid a pair of scissors and some clothespins, we asked the family with which we lived whether any one of them had seen the lost items. The family construed the question as an accusation that they had stolen the items from us, and it took several hours of reassuring conversation to convince them that we had meant nothing of the kind. Evidence suggests that

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ican aid programs on Greek society is to examine what has been accomplished in a few typical villages, for only after the agrarian problems of the nation have been somewhat relieved can there be much expectation of enriching or improving urban conditions.

Two general dividing lines separate the villages of Greece. By far the most important is the contrast, explained in Chapter 1, between hill and plain, that is, between food-deficit and food-surplus rural communities. A second general distinction is between those villages that underwent radical redistribution of land after World War I, and those where patterns of landownership have evolved piecemeal and privately without any massive governmental intervention. Generally, villages of the first type lie in the plains of the north, while all hill villages, and plains villages south of Thessaly, fall into the second category. In view of these important differences, it is necessary to study at least one village from each of these groupings.

Another point of distinction is the degree to which traditional patterns of village life underwent change during the past ten years. Some villages, whether by accident or thanks to intelligent and energetic leadership within the village, were able to undertake quite radical changes and profited very greatly from new techniques of agriculture. Others stayed generally within traditional frames. Still others were able to make only halfway satisfactory changes in old customs and techniques. It seems wise to try to illustrate different degrees of adjustment and improvement, first among plains villages, then among hill villages; and in each case to begin with an example of slight change and conclude with an example of maximally successful adjustment.

Before turning to an account of what particular villages have done, however, it might be well to say something about village leadership, and the relations between villagers and officials of the national government. Until 1951, the villages (and larger

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communities) were governed by appointees of the Ministry of Interior. This sometimes led to disharmony and distrust between the inhabitants and their legal representatives. In 1951, however, elections were organized in villages (and larger communities), so that for the first time since the war the people had a chance to choose their own local officials. Villagers elect members of the village council, which varies in size with the size of the community. The council members then choose one of their number as president and another as secretary.

The secretary's duty is to keep village records; but the main responsibilities rest upon the president. He represents the village in all dealings with the outer world, and has an informal authority to hear complaints and settle quarrels within the village. Legal cases, however, lie beyond his competence; they are dealt with by regular judges, appointed by the Ministry of Justice.

A second center of village leadership is the church. Every village has a church, and the priest is often a native of the village, distinguished from his fellows by a special garb and the fact that he has attended a seminary for a year or longer. Priests are appointed by bishops, but a congregation has the right to refuse a nomination, or to object to a priest it dislikes. In such cases the bishop normally attempts to find someone else to suit the wishes of the community.

A third focus of leadership is the school system. Nearly every village has a primary school, staffed by a teacher who has had at least a secondary school education. Unlike the priest or the president, he is most often a stranger to the community, appointed to his post by the Ministry of Education. Here, in many villages, lies an important point of contact with the outside world; but just because the schoolmaster is usually an outsider and often a city man, he fails to command in most villages quite the same trust and authority that the priest and president enjoy.

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622 As one would expect in any small community whose members
624 are acquainted from childhood, the effectiveness of formal leadership depends very much upon the personalities of the office holders. In some villages, the president and secretary have little real importance. As a minimum, they must keep records to
[702] allow the army to draft the young men when their age group
[653] is called up, and it is their duty to muster the able-bodied villagers for a fixed number of days' labor on roads or other public works when ordered to do so by officials of the central government. This labor service is the only form of direct taxation now
[651] enforced upon peasants, and money payment may be substituted for personal service if anyone cares to do so.

622 Only when a village chooses to undertake local improve-
631 ments requiring money or supplies from outside sources does the sphere of local government expand from this legal minimum. In such cases, the village president, perhaps assisted by some other members of the council, is expected to represent the village in all dealings with the agents of the central government from whom help is sought; and if the village contracts a corporate loan for some project, then the president becomes responsible for collecting the sums needed to repay the loan.

621 Generally, the villagers of Greece have a deep-seated and not
654 altogether groundless distrust of outsiders, particularly of government representatives, whom they suspect of being more
x178 often out to fleece than to help them. Long and persistent per-
[609] suasion is therefore usually required on the part of government officials to overcome this suspicion, and open the way for technical or other improvements in village life. More often than not, the initiative in bringing about the changes which have come to many villages in the past ten years came from outside the village, from the central government. Only after a start had been made, and the practical advantage of some new crop or technique had been demonstrated on a small scale, did the farmers

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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

villagers know that they are now much better off than the people in Yugoslav Macedonia, with whom they so recently felt a degree of kinship.

Since 1954 no representative of the Greek government has lived in the village. An army detachment, which had been there from 1949, departed in 1954, leaving patriotic slogans on the walls of the buildings used as barracks. No gendarmes came to replace the soldiers. Hence the village has been left very largely to its own devices. The inhabitants like it that way. As is true of all villages in Greece, the government no longer tries to collect direct taxes from Kotta (as it did before the war), but contents itself with a 2 per cent sales tax on products sold in town markets. This, for Kotta, amounts to paying almost no taxes at all, for the inhabitants sell almost nothing. This, too, pleases the villagers.

Kotta, therefore, is a community in which thoroughly old-fashioned attitudes prevail. In spite of the harrowing guerrilla war – or rather because of it – life has resumed its old, familiar channels; and since everyone now has enough to eat without having to venture into the outside world, the villagers seem well content to settle down within their nearly self-sufficient valley and let the world go by.

The real question for the future is whether or not the village will proceed once again to breed children on the reckless scale that prevailed before. The age structure of the surviving population is altogether anomalous, the removal of all children between the ages of two and fourteen in 1948 having left a great gap. Moreover, military losses and emigration overseas mainly affected young men and women of the next older age groups. The potentially childbearing population has therefore been drastically depleted, so much so that out of a total of seventy-seven families in 1956, the village contained only four or five couples of childbearing age. (One must bear in mind that in a

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with the farmers seemed to be genuinely friendly and highly effective in nearly all of the villages I visited. Here again, the American aid mission was entitled to a great deal of credit, for American advisers had made special efforts to reorganize the agricultural extension service on the model of the county agricultural agents in the United States. Many of the Greek agriculturalists had been sent to study in America before receiving their appointments. The public health agencies were another branch of the central administration in which a spirit of service had come to prevail; and there may have been others. In general, it was the older departments of the government, and particularly those concerned with money and taxes, in which the unpleasant but traditional attitudes were most firmly and universally established.

Another administrative change, and one which produced highly beneficial results in some localities at least, was the reinvigoration of local government. During the war and afterward, until 1951, local government officials were appointed through the Ministry of Interior. In 1951, however, local elections were organized, partly at least in response to repeated urging from Americans. As a result of these elections, village presidents and city mayors, together with advisory councils which assisted them in their administration, became more nearly independent of the central government, and commanded, presumably, more local confidence and support than was likely to be the case when the offices were filled by appointment from above.

The system did not always work smoothly – witness Cherasia; but my impression of the local officials whom I met in 1956 was on the whole a quite favorable one. Except in Cherasia, the village presidents seemed to have the full confidence of the villagers, and some of them were men of real intelligence and force of character. The president of Old Corinth would be

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621 a distinguished man in any company. Authority seemed to rest
631 as naturally upon his shoulders as the callouses rested upon
178 his palms. This easy relation between village officers and the people of their community had definitely not been characteristic in 1947.

621 Local government in Greece was suffering, however, from a
631 chronic and serious handicap. Local authorities lacked funds,
652 and could seldom do anything beyond routine administration without borrowing from some agency of the central government.[1] The result of this situation was to extend greatly the real authority and influence of the central government over local affairs. Village and municipal authorities spent a great deal of time waiting in the anterooms of officials of the central government in the hope of securing money with which to carry through some local improvement.

621 Villages had always depended on the Agricultural Bank or
651 on one of the central ministries for finding money for any im-
652 portant project; cities and towns until 1949 had financed their
178 local expenditures mainly through excise duties imposed upon
631 goods brought into the municipality. Before that year, long lines of peasant carts, waiting their turn at municipal excise stations, were a frequent sight in the outskirts of every town. Internal tariffs were abolished in 1949, however, and the share of the cigarette tax, levied nationally, which was assigned to municipalities in lieu of these excises proved generally inadequate. Town governments were therefore in poor shape financially, and any public improvements that were made came from special grants or loans from the central government.

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365] 1. The municipality of Athens, for example, had been insolvent for as long as anyone cared to recall. The problem was such that in 1955 and again in 1956, the Athens Power Company threatened to cut off the supply of electricity to municipal institutions unless some of the back bills were paid.

The Greeks have a story that when God made the world he put the earth through a sieve and used the soil to make the different countries; but the stones that were left in the sieve he threw over his shoulder, and they became Greece.[1] The land is so mountainous, precipitous and stony that out of the 50,100 square miles that constitute the area of Greece, only 25 per cent are usable as fields, orchards and pastures.[2] Yet on this land, out of a population of 7,335,675, according to 1940 figures, 60 per cent are directly engaged in agriculture, and another 15 per cent cater to the needs of the farmers.[3] This condition, as well as a growing population, is basic to the need for technical change in Greece. Through more than 2,500 years, Greece solved the problem of increasing population on limited land by sending out her people as colonists or immigrants. In the first two decades of this century, emigration to the United States provided the main solution. Early in the 1920s' two things took place which combined to make the population problem acute; the United States passed a law under which a quota was applied to immigrants, which limited drastically the number of Greeks who could thereafter enter the country; and the exchange of populations with Turkey, which increased the population of Greece suddenly by more than a fourth. Since then, the population figures from 1928 to 1940 indicate an annual increase of 1.5 per cent.[4] The traditional ways of farming and the traditional crops cannot support this growing population, even in terms of sheer subsistence. Change must be introduced at the very roots of the economy, striking at the relationship of man to the land and of man to his work, which is a close and meaningful one to the Greeks. How to do this without destroying the meaning of life is the question facing those entrusted with the introduction of change into this culture.

We give here a report of the basic structure, tenets, and attitudes of Greek culture which should be considered in applying change.

Greece has been undergoing induced change for several decades now. Before 1920, the centralization of political and civil affairs effected profound and permeating change in village communities which had been used to self-regulation, and where a prominent farmer spent his entire fortune to build a village school, or a schoolteacher, on hearing of the appearance of the enemy in the vicinity, could, on his own initiative, pass out arms and lead his pupils to battle. After the exchange of populations with Turkey in 1922, the Near East Foundation, helping to rehabilitate the refugees, also undertook to introduce changes in sanitation, child care and the standard of living generally. Changes in the areas of agriculture and health were

[1] A. W. Gomme, 1945, p. 11.
[2] *Report of the FAO Mission for Greece*, 1947, p. 85. (*See* United Nations, FAO).
[3] Ibid. p. 134.
[4] Ibid. p. 162.